

**REMARKS**

This Reply and Amendment is intended to be completely responsive to the final Office Action dated July 28, 2005. Claims 1-7, 9-14, 19-20, 22-23 and 27-38 are pending in this Application and stand rejected. Upon entry of this Amendment, Claims 1, 2, 5, 7, 19, 27, 31 and 36 will be amended, and Claims 4, 6, 33 and 37 will be canceled without prejudice to further prosecution on the merits. The Applicants respectfully request entry of the Amendment and reconsideration of Claims 1-3, 5, 7, 9-14, 19-20, 22-23, 27-32, 34-36 and 38.

**Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)**

In Section 1 of the Detailed Action, the Examiner rejected independent Claims 1, 27, 31 and 36 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,884,824 issued to Spring, Jr. (“Spring, Jr.”).

In Section 2 of the Detailed Action, the Examiner also rejected independent Claims 27 and 31 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,286,738 issued to Robins et al. (“Robins et al.”).

Spring, Jr. discloses “an equipment rack that may be installed on the roof of a vehicle” (see col. 4, lines 2-3).

Robins et al. discloses a “bicycle carrier that may be mounted on the rear [exterior] of a vehicle” (see col. 1, lines 5-6).

The Applicants respectfully submit that the none of the references cited in the final Office Action dated 7/28/2005, and the non-final Office Action dated 6/8/2005, and the non-final Office Action dated 5/27/2004 appear to disclose, teach or suggest a storage system for a vehicle having a combination of subject matter such as (among others) a support member(s) extending between and connectable to an interior overhead portion of a vehicle and an interior floor portion (or interior cargo portion) of a vehicle.

Independent Claim 1

Independent Claim 1 is in independent form. Independent Claim 1 (as amended) recites a combination of subject matter comprising, in combination with other elements, “at least one support member having a first end with a first quick-release connector and a second end with a second quick-release connector adapted to extend between and connect to an interior overhead portion and an interior floor portion of the vehicle.” A “support member having a first end with a first quick-release connector and a second end with a second quick-release connector adapted to extend between and connect to an interior overhead portion and an interior floor portion of the vehicle” as now required by independent Claim 1 (as amended) is not disclosed, taught or suggested by Spring, Jr. Accordingly, the Applicant submits that independent Claim 1 (as amended) is patentable under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) and respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of Claims 1-3, 5, 7, 14, 19-20 and 22-23.

Independent Claim 27

Independent Claim 27 is in independent form. Independent Claim 27 (as amended) recites a combination of subject matter comprising, in combination with other elements, “at least one telescoping support column having a first end with a first connector attachable to an interior overhead portion of the vehicle and a second end with a second connector attachable to an interior floor portion of the vehicle.” A “telescoping support column having a first end with a first connector attachable to an interior overhead portion of the vehicle and a second end with a second connector attachable to an interior floor portion of the vehicle” as now required by independent Claim 27 (as amended) is not disclosed, taught or suggested by Spring, Jr. or Robins et al. Accordingly, the Applicant submits that independent Claim 27 (as amended) is patentable under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) and respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of Claims 27 and 28.

Independent Claim 31

Independent Claim 31 is in independent form. Independent Claim 31 (as amended) recites a combination of subject matter comprising, in combination with other elements, “at least one adjustable length elongated support member having a first end with a first connector attachable to an overhead portion of the vehicle interior and a second end with a second connector attachable to a cargo portion of the vehicle interior.” An “adjustable length elongated support member having a first end with a first connector attachable to an overhead portion of the vehicle interior and a second end with a second connector attachable to a cargo portion of the vehicle interior” as now required by Claim 31 (as amended) is not disclosed, taught or suggested by Spring, Jr. or Robins et al. Accordingly, the Applicant submits that independent Claim 31 (as amended) is patentable under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) and respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of Claims 31-32 and 34-35.

Independent Claim 36

Independent Claim 36 is in independent form. Independent Claim 36 (as amended) recites a combination of subject matter comprising, in combination with other elements, “providing at least one elongated support member having a first end with a first quick-release connector attachable to an interior overhead portion of to the vehicle and a second end with a second quick-release connector attachable to an interior cargo portion of the vehicle.” The step of “providing at least one elongated support member having a first end with a first quick-release connector attachable to an interior overhead portion of to the vehicle and a second end with a second quick-release connector attachable to an interior cargo portion of the vehicle” as now required by independent Claim 36 (as amended) is not disclosed, taught or suggested by Spring, Jr. Accordingly, the Applicant submits that independent Claim 36 (as amended) is patentable under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) and respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of Claims 36 and 38.

**Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)**

In Section 4 of the Detailed Action, the Examiner rejected dependent Claims 9-12 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Spring et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,520,393 issued to Ferguson (“Ferguson”).

Dependent Claims 9-12 depend from independent Claim 1 (as amended). Independent Claim 1 now recites a combination of subject matter that the Applicant believes is patentable in view of the cited references. Accordingly, the Applicant respectfully submits that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) has been overcome and requests reconsideration and allowance of dependent Claims 9-12.

In Section 5 of the Detailed Action, the Examiner rejected dependent Claim 35 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Robins et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,842,615 issued to Goodness (“Goodness”).

Dependent Claim 35 depends from independent Claim 31 (as amended). Independent Claim 31 now recites a combination of subject matter that the Applicant believes is patentable in view of the cited references. Accordingly, the Applicant respectfully submits that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) has been overcome and requests reconsideration and allowance of dependent Claim 35.

The Applicant respectfully submits that each and every outstanding objection and rejection to the pending claims has been overcome, and the Application is in condition for allowance. Upon entry of this Amendment, Claims 1, 2, 5, 7, 19, 27, 31 and 36 will be amended and Claims 4, 6, 33 and 37 will be canceled without prejudice to further prosecution on the merits. The Applicant respectfully requests entry of the Amendment and reconsideration and allowance of Claims 1-3, 5, 7, 9-14, 19-20, 22-23, 27-32, 34-36 and 38.

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The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if the Examiner believes that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present Application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this Application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 06-1447. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 06-1447. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, the Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 06-1447.

Respectfully submitted,

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